

## Faith and Inspiration

# A Neighbor Just Like You

One could readily argue that modern technological social media has been both a boon and bane to society. Certainly, it has allowed many to maintain connections with loved ones across previously troublesome obstacles — e.g., geographic distance, political borders. Many also credit social media with providing a means to observe and record various regional or cultural events in near real-time, allowing unique and personal insight into otherwise remote, abstract, or obscure incidents around the world. Social media has also undoubtedly helped many groups and individuals arrange demonstrations of support, aid, encouragement, and positive protest on a scale not previously experienced.

On the other hand, multitudes have succumbed to the somewhat superficial and transitory allure of "likes," "followers," "subscribers," and similarly contrived mechanisms of interaction. A neutral observer might even conclude that the term "friend" has become curiously diluted over time, due partly to its casually nominal application on such platforms. Anyone can currently claim they have hundreds or even thousands of "friends" where the most minimal allegation of relationship — often a simple association of similar interest — might exist.

The Biblical premise of love and friendship tends to focus on individual obligation and responsibility, rather than mere crowd appeal. Indeed, an Old Testament verse states that "A person of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24).

One of the most vivid expressions of Jesus's concern about actual relationships is the parable commonly identified as the "Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:25-37). And one of its most interesting aspects is that it was a response to a particular individual's somewhat condescending and sanctimonious claim to have met the requirements of God's righteousness. While the person did rightly indicate that the scriptures teach us to "love your neighbor as yourself," he somehow felt the need to challenge Jesus to identify exactly "who is my neighbor." As was his habit, Jesus re-framed the original question in an effort to provide opportunity for the individual to gain insight into their own need for redemption. Rather than simply asking to whom should we selectively apply our interpretation of love, the question ought to be how should we seek to apply the Biblical principle of

neighborly love.

Most people have understood that it was obviously the Samaritan in the parable who manifested neighborly love. However, many modern readers might not fully appreciate the significance and

gravity of such an illustration. As partial descendants of some of the original tribes of Israel, the Samaritans' mixed ancestry, along with some divergent traditions regarding worship, led to a cultural and social schism between themselves and the Jews which persisted over centuries.



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By presenting a Samaritan as someone who was fulfilling the expectation of unconditional love, Jesus challenges the Law expert's

— and our own — assumptions and biases. And it was not a matter of diminishing or disparaging one man's interpretation of faith to elevate any others. The point is not merely to contend that a discriminated party would somehow naturally exhibit better conduct. Indeed, Samaritans generally possessed similar degrees of prejudice toward Jews; it was not a one-sided animosity.

Part of the intention of this parable is to emphasize the need to overcome preconception and provincialism, to supersede base emotions and feelings about others. One could conclude that it is not necessary to "like" someone or embrace their customs, attitudes, behavior, or philosophy, in order to demonstrate neighborly love towards them.

In an episode of the "Star Trek: Enterprise" television series, Phlox, an alien member of the crew serving as the ship's doctor, encounters a situation in which a constituent of the ancestral enemy of his species requires his medical intervention to survive a lethal dose of radiation. The two engage in a series of confrontations and disputes surrounding the historical contempt between their peoples. Phlox does his best to assure the patient, Hudak, that he is only interested in his welfare, but is met with extreme resistance and refusal of treatment. Phlox makes a final appeal toward their future

generations.

PHLOX: You also asked me if I have children. I have five. And no, I never told them my grandmother's stories. When they asked me about the Antarans, I told them the truth, as best as I knew it. I told them about our military campaigns against your people. About how we had demonised you, turned you into a faceless enemy. I wanted them to learn to judge people for what they really are, not what the propaganda tells them.

HUDAK: How would you know who we really are?

PHLOX: I don't. But I'm proud to say that my children would consider my grandmother's attitude archaic. All of them but one.

We have grown more open-minded since the last war, but there are still Denobulans who fear Antarans, even hate them. My youngest son, Mettus, was seduced by those people. I did my best to convince him he was mistaken. I told him I wouldn't tolerate the values he was embracing. It created a rift between us. Maybe I didn't do enough to reach him. Last time we spoke was nearly ten years ago. You wanted to know what my children would think if they were here now. I can tell you what Mettus would think. He would be happy to have me grant your request and let you die. But that is not the example I tried to set for my children. Why not live and set an example for yours?

Ultimately, Hudak consents to treatment and is able to return to his planet. As in the parable of the good Samaritan, we see that treating others in a neighborly fashion is not dependent on whether they are our "friends." Neighborly love as encouraged by the gospel exceeds any illusory or frivolous "friendship" we might formulate from a skewed perception of relationships.

My wife is currently experiencing the significant challenge of being a good neighbor for someone with whom she does not possess much commonality of belief, outlook, or intentions. She has taken it upon herself to provide physical, emotional, and spiritual support for this individual who has proven to be, at best, problematic in their response. While my wife would most likely assert that she does not specifically consider this individual a "friend" in any conventional sense, she understands that in their current situation, this person benefits more from someone who is able to provide real care for actual health and well-being and not simply for convenience or comfort.

In my wife's daily efforts, I am witnessing the good Samaritan in action, with all the complications, generosity, restraint, and sincerity that such living entails. Even the expert in the Law who challenged Jesus conceded that the true neighbor was "the one who showed compassion." As Jesus's final proposition in that passage states, let us all "go and do likewise."

## OBITUARY

# Nadine Shuler-Draper

Nadine Avis Nickens died peacefully on April 9, 2022 in her son's home in Chatham County, North Carolina. She was 105 years old.

She was born February 1, 1917 in D'Lo, Mississippi as the first child of Robert Leo Nickens and Lillian Mae Johnson.

Her father's work in forestry led to a childhood in remarkable locations. She shared vivid stories of the beauty of the landscapes of Trés Barras, Santa Catherina, Brazil; Tenmile, Oregon; and Norman's Castle, Abaco, The Bahamas.

She attended St Joseph's Academy in St Augustine, Florida, then lived with her aunt Modena Holland to graduate from high school in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

She moved to Florida where she worked for Southern Bell. She met Georgia Representative Laurier Sheffield Bush of Mitchell County, Georgia and married him on June 11, 1940 in Columbia, Florida.

They lived on their farm, about nine miles south of Camilla, Georgia. Her son Laurier Ross was born in 1941. The family moved to Homestead, Florida in the 1950s. There, Nadine and Laurier divorced.

Nadine met Benjamin (Ben) Allen Shuler and they were wed on July 17, 1956. They lived at 235 NW 19th St in Homestead for many years. Nadine worked for Southern Bell.

After retirement, she took up painting, mentored by Florida painter A. E. Backus. Her work delighted the friends and family who received her canvases of Georgia and Florida landscapes, poinciana trees, and increasingly

abstract works.

After Ben died in 1993, Nadine moved to Sun City Center, Florida where she met Charles Hugh Draper. They married July 4, 2002 and enjoyed cruises and travel. As they became less active, Nadine's niece Constance Pettit helped them live comfortably and safely. Her gift of care meant Nadine could be at home through her 105th birthday.

Her spiritual life was evident in her kindness and warmth. She had an ability to uplift and inspire friends and strangers with her positive thinking. She was a Religious Science Practitioner for over 65 years, and was trained during Ernest Holmes' life by his cousin, Idella Chadwick. Every morning she read the Daily Guides of Science of Mind Magazine and did what she called her "work," praying for everyone and the world.

Nadine was predeceased by her parents; stepmother Abigail (Abbie) Collins; husbands Laurier Sheffield Bush, Benjamin (Ben) Allen Shuler, and Charles Hugh Draper; stepchildren Eugene Dale Shuler and Dan Draper; her brother Robert Leo Nickens Jr., and one step-granddaughter.

Surviving is her son, Laurier Ross Bush and his wife Marie of Apex, NC, her stepchildren Christine Dimitrijevic, Arlene Byrne, Lisa Draper, Kathann Middlemiss, Bruce Draper, and Charles (Reg) Draper; three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, five step-grandchildren, and nine step-great-grandchildren.

The family plans a memorial in Florida at some point in the coming year.

To submit an obituary or death notice, email wording and jpg photo to [info@newsleadermail.com](mailto:info@newsleadermail.com), 305-245-2311  
Print deadline is Wednesday at noon.

## Temple Hatikvah

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or visit [www.thhjc.org](http://www.thhjc.org)



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On Memorial Day, our nation honors military service members who have given their lives to preserve our freedoms. Families, friends, and communities come together to remember the

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great sacrifices of military members and ensure their legacies live on.

The benefits we provide can help the families of deceased military service members. For example, widows, widowers, and dependent children may be eligible for Social Security survivors benefits.

You can learn more about those benefits at [www.ssa.gov/survivors](http://www.ssa.gov/survivors). We also offer support to wounded warriors.

Social Security benefits protect veterans when injuries prevent them from returning to active

duty or performing other work. Both the Department of Veteran Affairs and Social Security have disability programs. You may qualify for disability benefits through one or both programs. Read our new fact sheet, "Social Security Disability and Veterans Affairs Disability — How Do They Compare?" at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-64-125.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-64-125.pdf).

Depending on your situation, some members of your family, including your dependent children or spouse, may be eligible to receive Social Security benefits.

Wounded military service members can receive quicker processing of their Social Security disability claims. If you are a veteran with a 100% Permanent & Total compensation rating

from the Department of Veterans Affairs, we'll expedite your disability claim.

Visit [www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors](http://www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors) for answers to frequently asked questions or to find information about the application process.

Thinking about retirement or know a veteran who is? Military service members can receive Social Security benefits in addition to their military retirement benefits. For details, visit our webpage for veterans, available at [www.ssa.gov/people/veterans](http://www.ssa.gov/people/veterans).

Please share this information with the military families you know. We honor and thank the veterans who bravely served and died for our country and the military service members who serve today.

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If you have a personal my Social Security account, you can view your Social Security Statement online to learn about your future benefits and recent earnings history. Included with the Statement are fact sheets that provide useful information based on your age group and earnings situation.

Last month, we released a new fact sheet specifically for people with limited earnings. The new fact sheet covers how you and your family

members may qualify for benefits, including:

- Supplemental Security Income.
- Social Security retirement benefits.
- Children's benefits.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
- Help with health care costs — including Medicare, Medicare Savings Programs, Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug costs, and Medicaid.

Our Benefits Eligibility Screening Tool at [ssabest.benefits.gov](http://ssabest.benefits.gov) is a convenient way to find potential benefits that best fit your situation. To learn more, visit our Social Security Statement webpage at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount/statement.html](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/statement.html).

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